

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEGUCI 04450 291607Z

67

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 EB-11 SCEM-02 SCI-06 COME-00

TRSE-00 INT-08 DRC-01 /159 W
----- 114983

R 282258Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5758

INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEGUCIGALPA 4450

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, HO

SUBJ: FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS IN HONDURAN PETROLEUM
SHORTAGE

REF: TEGUCIGALPA 4394 AND PREVIOUS

1. DURING ITS MIDDAY BROADCAST, NOV 28, LOCAL RADIO STATION HRN REPEATEDLY TRANSMITTED A BROADCAST SAYING THAT WALLACE MCDONALD, MANAGER IN HONDURAS OF TEXACO, HAS BEEN DECLARED "PUBLIC ENEMY NO 1," ADDING THAT HE SHOULD BE EXPELLED FROM HONDURAS, BECAUSE HE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PETROLEUM CRISIS AFFECTING THE COUNTRY. HRN STATED THAT MCDONALD HAS DONE EVERYTHING HE CAN TO CAUSE VENEZUELA TO REDUCE ITS SHIPMENTS OF CRUDE TO HONDURAS BECAUSE THE GOH WOULD NOT RESPOND TO HIS "WHIMS" (CAPRICHOS).

2. THE STATION WAS NOT CLEAR ON EXACTLY WHO HAD CONFERRED THE "PUBLIC ENEMY" TITLE BUT SAID ITS INFORMATION CAME FROM INVESTIGATION INTO THE PROBLEM WHICH LED HRN TO DISCUSSIONS WITH AFFECTED PERSONS AND ORGANIZATIONS.
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PAGE 02 TEGUCI 04450 291607Z

HRN SAID SOME UNIONS AND OTHERS WOULD ASK THAT MCDONALD

BE TRANSFERRED, BASED ON A SERIES OF ACCUSATIONS INCLUDING MCDONALD'S HAVING INSULTED MINECON BENNATON. THE REQUEST FOR TRANSFER WOULD NOT COME FROM OFFICIAL SECTORS, THE STATION SAID, BUT FROM THE HONDURAN PETROLEUM ASSN. WHICH WOULD DIRECT THE REQUEST TO THE U.S. EMBASSY.

3. IN OTHER DEVELOPMENTS: PETROLEUM SHORTAGES HAVE BECOME ACUTE THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY AND SOME STATIONS HAVE HAD TO SIMPLY STOP SELLING GASOLINE. THE EMBASSY HAS PROVISIONALLY ARRANGED THAT OUR SUPPLIER ESSO DELIVER OUR "QUOTA" (I.E., ESSO HAS SAID THE EMBASSY CAN EXPECT TO RECEIVE THE SAME AMOUNTS WHICH WERE CONSUMED BY THE MISSION, BOTH OFFICIALLY AND PRIVATELY, DURING THE MONTHS OF NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER 1972 AND JANUARY 1973) TO ONE GASOLINE STATION WHICH IS CONTINUING TO HONOR OUR NEEDS. THIS IS LEADING TO ILL FEELINGS, HOWEVER, IN THAT THIS STATION IS HAVING TO TURN AWAY PRIVATE HONDURANS WHILE IT CONTINUES AT THE SAME TIME TO SELL TO EMBASSY PERSONNEL.

4. EMBASSY HEARD NOV 28 THAT ACCORDING TO POMPEYO BINILLA, APPOINTMENT SECRETARY TO GENERAL LOPEZ, AND HERNAN APARICIO, SUB-SECRETARY IN MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS, THE GOH IS PLANNING TO ASK THE EMBASSY "HOW IT IS POSSIBLE THE EMBASSY HAS 66,000 GALLONS OF GASOLINE" WHEN THE SHORTAGE IS SO ACUTE THROUGHOUT THE NATION. COMMENT: THIS FIGURE IS QUITE ERRONEOUS. THE QUOTA WHICH ESSO HAS COMPUTED BASED UPON LAST YEAR'S CONSUMPTION IS 10,343 GALLONS FOR NOV 1973; 9,593 GALLONS FOR DEC 1973; 8,430 GALLONS FOR JAN 1974. IN ADDITION THE EMBASSY HAS FILLED A 2,000 GALLON STORAGE TANK.

5. LATE-BREAKING DEVELOPMENT: AS THIS TELEGRAM BEING TYPED, HRN STATION MANAGER, NAHUM VALLADARES, PHONED PAO TO APOLOGIZE IN NAME OF ENTIRE STATION FOR ATTACK MADE TODAY ON MCDONALD. VALLADARES SAID THE BROADCAST HAD BEEN MADE ON THE AIR WITHOUT STATION APPROVAL ("SE LA ESCAPO") BY A "RUDE" ("MALCRIADO") REPORTER. HE SAID THE AIRING HAD BEEN A TECHNICAL MISTAKE INVOLVING A TELEPHONE PATCH. VALLADARES SAID THE STATION WANTED CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 TEGUCI 04450 291607Z

MCDONALD TO KNOW "THEY LAMENT THIS" BUT HE DID NOT MENTION MAKING A PUBLIC RETRACTION.
SANCHEZ

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NNN

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